

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 INR-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 L-01 IO-03 PRS-01 EUR-08 /047 W

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P 282300Z OCT 75

FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4437

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELIZE 0711

LIMDIS

FOR ARA/CEN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR GT BH

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH GOVERNOR RE UK-GUATEMALA DISPUTE

REF: A)STATE 251699 B) BELIZE 0685

1. PURPOSE OF THIS TELEGRAM IS TO RAISE BOTH PROCEDURAL AND
POLICY QUESTIONS BASED ON PARA 7 REFTEL.

2. GOVERNOR POSNETT CALLED ME EARLY LAST WEEK IN A STATE
OF SOME AGITATION, HAVING JUST RECEIVED A MESSAGE (FROM FCO,
I GATHERED) CALLING UPON HIM TO ACCOUNT FOR COMMENTS MADE
TO US CONGEN BELIZE IN WHICH H.E. WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE SAID
THAT THE BRITISH WOULD LOOK TO THE AMERICANS "TO MAKE THE
RUNNING IN NEW YORK" IN DEALING WITH ANY GUATEMALAN REACTION
TO "OUR RESOLUTION." THE GOVERNOR WANTED TO KNOW WHAT I HAD
REPORTED THAT COULD HAVE PRODUCED THIS REACTION. IN REPLY
I SAID IT WAS HARD FOR ME TO IMAGINE HOW THIS COULD BE ATTRI-
BUTED TO ANYTHING I HAD REPORTED BUT THAT I HAD REPORTED WHAT
HE HAD HOPED THE AMERICANS COULD BE PREVAILED UPON TO DO, ONCE
AN UNGA RESOLUTION ON BELIZE IS ADOPTED. I READ THE GOVERNOR
PRECISELY WHAT I HAD REPORTED (PARA 4 OF REF B) AND HE CONFIRMED
ITS ACCURACY, NOTING ONLY THAT HE WOULD HAVE USED THE WORD
"MINISTERS" RATHER THAN "CABINET" SINCE SOME OF THE DISCUSSIONS
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HE HAD HAD WITH GOB OFFICIALS HAD BEEN INFORMAL.

3. MY RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNOR HAVE BEEN CORDIAL, AND MY IMPRESSION IS THAT HE HAS CONFIDED IN ME FREELY, ALTHOUGH HE KNOWS, OF COURSE, THAT I REPORT ON OUR CONVERSATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT. I THINK THIS HAS BEEN A USEFUL RELATIONSHIP AND COULD BECOME EVEN MORE SO IN THE WEEKS AND MONTHS AHEAD.

4. WHILE I DO NOT CONTEND THAT HE PRESERVATION OF THIS RELATIONSHIP IS INDISPENSABLE, I SHOULD REGRET ITS BEING DESTROYED OR IMPAIRED WITHOUT OUR DERIVING SOME ADVANTAGE THEREFROM. MY REASON FOR MENTIONING THIS IS THAT I AM CERTAIN SOME DAMAGE TO THE RELATIONSHIP WILL BE DONE WHENEVER H.E. FINDS HIMSELF SUMMONED TO THE WOODSHED BY HIS SUPERIORS AT FCO BECAUSE OF SOMETHING HE HAS SAID TO ME. THE FACT THAT THE MESSAGE WAS BADLY GARBLED ALONG THE WAY WAS PROBABLY FORTUITOUS, SINCE I WAS ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE GOVERNOR'S CONCERN BY PROVING THERE HAD BEEN A SIGNIFICANT COMMUNICATIONS ERROR.

5. FOR FUTURE USE, I WOULD SUGGEST AN ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE WHICH WOULD AVOID THE RISK OF UNNECESSARILY IMPAIRING MY RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNOR, I.E. FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO INSTRUCT ME TO SET THE GOVERNOR STRAIGHT IF MY REPORTS INDICATE HE IS UNDER SOME MISAPPREHENSION IN REGARD TO SOME ASPECT OF US POLICY. IF IT IS FELT THAT THE FCO MAY SHARE IN SUCH MISAPPREHENSION, I FEEL CERTAIN SOME WAY COULD BE DEvised TO BROACH SUBJECT WITHOUT PINNING IT ON REMARKS EXPRESSED TO ME IN CONFIDENCE BY GOVERNOR.

6. ORDINARILY, I WOULD DISABUSE GOVERNOR ON THE SPOT WITHOUT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS IF CIRCUMSTANCES SEEMED TO REQUIRE. IN THE PRESENT INSTANCE, HOWEVER, IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME WHY WE WOULD OBJECT TO HAVING THE GOVERNOR EXPRESS TO THE GOB THE HOPE THAT, ONCE AN ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION WERE ADOPTED BY UNGA, WE MIGHT BE PREVAILED UPON TO URGE THE GUATEMALANS TO ACCEPT IT AND TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT REACHING AN AGREEMENT RE TERMS, CONDITIONS, CONCESSIONS ETC. MY INTERPRETATION OF THIS WAS THAT THE GOVERNOR, IN THE COURSE OF URGING THE BELIZEANS TO SOFTEN THE TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION WAS SIMPLY IMPLYING THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD FIND IT EASIER TO

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PERSUADE THEIR GUATEMALAN FRIENDS TO ACCEPT A MODERATE RESOLUTION THAN IT WOULD BE TO GET THEM TO ACCEPT A TOUGH ONE. THE GOVERNOR CAN JUSTLY CLAIM PART OF THE CREDIT FOR HAVING MOVED THE GOB TOWARD A MORE MODERATE POSITION AND THIS HAS PROBABLY BEEN ONE OF HIS ARGUMENTS.

7. FINALLY, ARE WE QUITE SURE THE GOVERNOR IS MISTAKEN IN SUGGESTING TO THE BELIZEANS THAT WE MIGHT BE PREVAILED UPON

TO EXERT OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE GUATEMALANS IN AN EFFORT
TO GET THEM TO ACCEPT AND ABIDE BY THE RESOLUTION ONCE
IT HAS BEEN ADOPTED? IS IT UNREASONABLE TO EXPECT THAT
ONCE THE RESOLUTION IS ADOPTED WE ARE LIKELY TO FIND
OURSELVES URGING BOTH SIDES TO ACCEPT A RESOLUTION WHICH
IS NOT FULLY SATISFACTORY TO EITHER?
GAWF

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, BOUNDARY CLAIMS, UNGA RESOLUTIONS, PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BELIZE00711
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750374-0210
From: BELIZE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751015/aaaaanjf.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 BELIZE 685
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 SEP 2003 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <19 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH GOVERNOR RE UK-GUATEMALA DISPUTE
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, GT, BH, UK, US, (POSNETT, RICHARD N)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006